

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

DATE, TIME AND

PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, December 12, 2002, 8:00 a.m., Legislative Hearing Room 1510, Nebraska State Capitol, 15th & K Streets, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members: Jeff Searcy, VJ Nelson, Kim Todd, and Karen Kilgarin

Others: Lynn Johnson and Jerry Shorney (Parks & Recreation), Ed Zimmer and Missy Minner (Planning Dept.)

STATED PURPOSE

OF THE MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

Searcy called the meeting to order and called for the vote to approve the August 22, 2002 meeting notes. Meeting notes were approved as distributed.

Elements for 2002 Annual Report of Commission -

Design Standards and Antelope Valley -

Zimmer indicated that issues regarding Centennial Mall include the extended boundaries. The boundaries were extended to S Street on the north and to 35th Street on the east last year. Right-of-way guidelines need to be added to the design standards for these areas. He suggested that broad goals be developed by a subcommittee and City staff. Those goals would then be brought back to the Commission, then taken before Planning Commission and finally City Council for formal adoption. The adopted design standards should also be reviewed for amendments needed, particularly regarding building renovations.

Todd asked about tying Antelope Valley into these design standards. Johnson stated that with the new boundaries, a portion of Antelope Valley is in the Environs district. Zimmer added that the bridge at J Street would need to come before the Commission for approval of the design.

Searcy suggested that he would work with Zimmer and contact members to request volunteers to serve on the subcommittees. Zimmer noted that it would be most productive to have two separate subcommittees, one for Antelope Valley and the other for the design standards.

He added that the Urban Design Committee, of which Todd is a member, had a key first discussion regarding Antelope Valley at its meeting on December 4, 2002. The new Planning Director has a strong Urban Design background and desires more involvement by Planning in urban design issues. Antelope Valley will need to be notified that the portions of that project that fall within the Environs District will need to come before the Commission.

Lincoln Mall - Searcy asked about the status of the Lincoln Mall refurbishing.

Johnson stated that a contract has been made with Clark Enerson for the design portion. Commission involvement is needed. Construction is scheduled for this summer. Dallas McGee and Jeff Cole, Urban Development, are key City staff. Dennis Scheer is the contact with Clark Enerson.

Zimmer suggested this item be handled at the regular meetings of the Commission. Concept and design may need to be presented at the January meeting in order to meet the schedule.

Inter-Local Agreement between Seward and Lancaster Counties - Zimmer explained that this item is difficult to frame the best political approach. Mike DeKalb is working with the Lancaster County Commissioners to find someone to champion the effort with the Seward County Board on a County Board to County Board basis, rather than having a city-state commission (of which the majority are appointed by the city of Lincoln) approach the Seward County Board. Ed suggests we take care not to step on the toes of those entities we want to work with in this effort. He added that the new Comprehensive Plan is missing ample language regarding the cooperated efforts of neighboring counties. He suggested that an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is needed to address that. The annual review of the Plan would provide that opportunity. He suggested that this item remain on the list and asked that a Commissioner join in the discussions.

Centennial Mall - Zimmer indicated that the revised plan from Laging has not advanced too much. The Capitol Commission requested an updated copy of the Plan. It is unclear what level of interest the State might be displaying with the budget problems. The next step may be to discuss the next phase of needed emergency repairs and clean up.

Johnson stated that the remaining piece of the contract is cost estimates. The contract has been extended until May, 2003. The Antelope Valley CIP preparation is beginning. That will be taken to the City Council so that they understand how it is being built and who will maintain it. Parks plans to set aside \$100,000 each year in the CIP as budget for Antelope Valley. It is possible that money could be used for repair and renovation. With the condition of the State budget, Antelope Valley will take precedent over Centennial Mall.

He added that the Mayor formed a group to prioritize projects the City should generate donations for. Sunken Gardens was the priority identified. Antelope Valley and Centennial Mall were given equal second priority.

Searcy stated that he is interested in moving this forward. He suggested setting up a subcommittee that would reach out to the community and other organizations to see what can be done to do so.

Zimmer agreed that a standing subcommittee on Centennial Mall that would report to the full Commission would be beneficial.

Searcy added that he had received a phone call from the Downtown Rotary Club which has its centennial coming up in 2010. It would like to set aside funds on an annual basis to put toward something meaningful. They are thinking of putting perhaps \$1 million toward Centennial Mall. There may be other centennial organizations in the State that may be interested in doing the same.

Todd suggested that the new Laging plan be formally adopted before gathering stakeholders to avoid having changes made to the design to accommodate stakeholders become a conflict with the graciousness of the donors.

Todd added that this issue is two-fold. One issue is lack of funding. The other is lack of awareness of the need for this.

Zimmer suggested that if the City had some money for this project, so that it was matching the funds from the Rotary, the State might be encouraged to do its part, even if individual "block champions" are several years off.

Todd expressed the need for someone with a media background to be a champion for this effort to help raise awareness.

Kilgarin offered to help with public relations. Since 4th grade classes statewide visit the Capitol, she suggested a statewide campaign in schools to raise money for the Mall.

Zimmer indicated that these items would be included in the annual report. The final report will be brought to the Commission at the January meeting for adoption.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 am.